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THE  
A B C  
OF  
SKIRMISHING:  
BEING THE  
LIGHT INFANTRY MOVEMENTS OF A COMPANY.

IN ACCORDANCE WITH  
THE FIELD EXERCISE AND EVOLUTIONS OF INFANTRY. 1859.

BY  
WILLIAM D. MALTON,  
LATE LIEUT. 2ND ROYAL MIDDLESEX RIFLE MILITIA.  
(*Author of "Company and Battalion Drill Illustrated," &c.*)

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SECOND EDITION.

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## PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

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THIS little work is published under the idea that a short Manual of reference on Elementary Light Drill may, at the present time, be found useful.

The language of the *Field Exercise*, than which nothing could be more clear or concise, has been closely adhered to throughout.

May, 1859.



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## EXTRACT FROM THE CIRCULAR MEMORANDUM

DATED "HOBSE GUARDS, 1ST MAY, 1860."

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\* \* \* \* \*

"The improved range and accuracy of fire of the arms now in general use render it doubly important that every soldier should, when skirmishing, be prepared to take such advantage of ground and cover as will enable him, with the least exposure of his own person, to inflict the greatest amount of injury on his opponents.

\* \* \* \* \*

"The attention of the skirmishers should be especially called to the following points:—

"Skirmishers, when under fire, must take advantage of all cover. The men of a file should always work together; both men should never be unloaded at the same time; they should always, when practicable, load under cover, before moving to the front when advancing, and after falling back when retiring.

"Young soldiers (particularly when first opening fire) are apt to waste their ammunition; its value, therefore, cannot be too carefully impressed on their minds, and they should be made to understand that the principal advantage of their rifle—viz., accuracy of fire, is lost if, in moving from spot to spot, they do not consider well the distance they are from the object they are about to fire at, and are not careful to adjust the back-sight accordingly.

"The files must be careful not to get in front of each other. When small objects, such as trees or rocks, afford cover for a few files only, the men must not crowd behind them in numbers, as they will be safer in the open. Here they should load and fire lying, and move rapidly when the advance or retreat renders a change of position necessary, throwing themselves at once on the ground.

"Bugle sounds should be avoided as much as possible; the men should be practised at 'passing the word,' and made to understand signals.

"The men should be taught that good cover may be obtained from the slightest rise or fall of ground,—more especially when engaged at long ranges—a slight furrow, a few stones or small bushes, will often afford cover in the absence of trees, rocks, walls, banks, &c.

"Skirmishers should be taught to judge rapidly for themselves of the nature of the ground on which they are acting, and of the best mode of occupying it. In defending a line of heights, the edge of a wood, or any ditches, walls, &c., they should follow the windings of the cover, instead of remaining in line, taking care to leave no considerable gaps, and not to collect in groups.

"A line of skirmishers may be exercised with advantage in passing obstacles, such as ponds, farm buildings, &c., the men opposite these obstacles doubling in rear of the files on the right and left; but running out to their proper places as soon as the obstacles are passed.

"Before quitting one position each file should decide on the next they intend to occupy, which they should make for in double time; when at close quarters one man of a file should cover the advance or retreat of his comrade while running from point to point, the men protecting each other in turn while exposed.

"The fire of skirmishers may often be better employed against the enemy's files on their right and left than against those in their immediate front, who are more likely to be completely covered.

"It is impossible for the officers to place each file of their companies; the men must be made to understand that they are responsible for the cover each file may select.

"They should keep in sight the files on their right and left, and, when the ground permits, should resume the general line of dressing, and their proper distance, making use of their own intelligence, without waiting for special directions.

"The dressing of a line of skirmishers is a matter of no importance, as long as the connexion between files is kept up. In advancing or retiring, those files having cover should remain in their position until those on their right and left have passed them by 15 or 20 paces. In advancing, files should run on to cover, when the general line is within 50 paces of it, holding it as above. The fire of one protected skirmisher is of more value than that of five when exposed.

\* \* \* \* \*

"By Command,

"J. YORKE SCARLETT,

*"Adjutant-General."*

# GENERAL PRINCIPLES

or

## SKIRMISHING.

---

### SKIRMISHERS, SUPPORTS, AND RESERVES.

#### (1) *Skirmishers.*

THE movements of the Skirmishers must depend, in a great measure, on the position and movements of the Enemy: they should always, however, protect and over-lap the flanks of the main body they are intended to cover.

Skirmishers (whether halted or in motion) when under fire, should take advantage of all cover: taking care, when advancing or retiring, not to get in front of each other, or to retain their places of cover so long as to interfere with their own or their comrades' fire.

All lines of Skirmishers move by their *centre*: except when inclining to a flank (*see p. 20*), in which case they move by the flank to which they are inclining.

The distance between Skirmishers and Supports, on a plain, should be about 200 yards (= 240 paces)†.

Whenever Skirmishers are directed to HALT (whether by word of command or by bugle sound), they will halt and *kneel*, facing to their proper front.

N.B.—Men in extended order will invariably face (or turn) to the *right-about*; whether advancing, retiring, firing, or not firing.

---

† A pace is five-sixths of a yard. To reduce yards to paces, therefore, multiply the number of yards by 6 and divide by 5: to reduce paces to yards, multiply the number of paces by 5 and divide by 6.

When one man of a file has to pass the other, he will always pass him by the proper left.

*General Rules for Skirmishers firing.*—The men of a file must always work together. Both men are never to be unloaded at the same time: when moving, the loaded man should always be nearest the Enemy. Men will always load, when practicable, under cover: loading, if *advancing*, before moving to the front; if *retiring*, after falling back.

When Skirmishers (either halted or on the march) are directed to CEASE FIRING, they will complete their loading; and the rear-rank men, if not already there, will resume their places in the proper rear of their respective front-rank men.

It should be recollected that CEASE FIRING *is the only sound that annuls the FIRE.*

## (2) *Supports.*

The Supports should always be composed of numbers equal to the line of Skirmishers: thus, each Company that is extended should have a Company to support it; and in the case of a single Company detached to skirmish, one Subdivision should skirmish while the other remains formed in support.

It is the duty of the Supports to assist and support the Skirmishers in every possible way: the movements of the former must therefore correspond with those of the latter.

Each Support should be in rear of the centre of its own Skirmishers.

Supports take ground to a flank by Sections: if moving diagonally to the front or rear, they move in echelon of Sections (see *Field Exercise*, p. 71).

The distance between Supports and Reserves should be about 300 yards (= 360 paces).

---

Both Skirmishers and Supports move with trailed Arms: except when in close Column of Sections (p. 26), or when marching in File; on which occasions they will necessarily *advance* [or *shoulder*].

### (3) *Reserves.*

The Reserve is the point on which both Supports and Skirmishers may rally: and should be at least one-third of the whole body. It will be placed as nearly as possible in rear of the centre of the formation, in order to send relief to the Supports and Skirmishers as occasion may require.

In the presence of Cavalry, the Reserve should be kept in Column; but under the fire of Artillery, should be deployed into Line (see *Field Exercise*, p. 163.).

Reserves, when in Column, take ground to a flank by fours: if moving obliquely to front or rear, they move by the diagonal march [RIGHT (OR LEFT) HALF TURN].

The Reserve will be about 500 yards (= 600 paces) from the main body.

Reserves move with sloped [or trailed] Arms.

Light Infantry movements will usually be performed in Quick time: but extensions, or closings, *on the march*; the formation of Company- or Rallying-Squares; and changes of front from the halt; will be in Double time. [In Quick time, 108 30-inch steps (= 90 yards): in Double time, 150 36-inch steps (= 150 yards): are taken in a minute.] The men may at any time, if necessary, be directed to double, either by word of command or bugle sound.

## OFFICERS.

1. When a Company is *extended*, the Captain will be in rear of the centre: the Lieutenant, in rear of the right: the Ensign, in rear of the left.

[The Lieutenant of a flank Company will always be in rear of its outer flank, whether that flank is the right or left: the Ensign, in rear of the inner flank.]

Commands must be repeated by the Captain and every Supernumerary belonging to the line of Skirmishers.

2. When a Company is in *support*, the Captain (both in advancing and retiring) is in its proper front; thus leading the Company when it advances, following it when it retires. The Lieutenant and Ensign will be in the proper rear.

The Officer commanding a Support should—with due regard to the assistance he should afford the Skirmishers—take advantage of all inequalities of ground, &c. to get his men under cover. The best positions to select are those which will protect the men if attacked by Cavalry, without preventing the Skirmishers forming on them.

3. The Officers of a *Reserve* will always be placed as in Column, *right* in front: *i.e.*, the Captains on the left of the front rank, the Lieutenants one pace in rear of the 2nd file from the right, the Ensigns one pace in rear of the centre, of their respective Companies.

The Officer commanding the Reserve—though availing himself of cover when practicable, and not neglecting the protection of the main body—should chiefly direct his attention to the selection of positions favourable to the relief and assistance of the Skirmishers and Supports.

N.B. Supports and Reserves, if not under cover, should always lie down when halted.

[*Connecting Links*.—A non-commissioned Officer (or more, if necessary) may be sent out from a Support, to keep up the connexion with its Skirmishers: and similar connecting links may be sent out from the Reserve, to keep up the connexion between it and the Supports. These men may be employed, when necessary, to pass

words of command, &c.: when so employed, and the voice (owing to noise or wind) cannot be heard, they will run up and deliver their orders, and then resume their places.]

---

### BUGLE SOUNDS.

|           |                   |                |
|-----------|-------------------|----------------|
| One G     | denotes the right | } of the line. |
| Two G's   | denote the centre |                |
| Three G's | „ the left        |                |

The G (or G's) preceding any Sound denote the part of the line to which the Sound applies.

*E.g.* Two G's sounded before the **EXTEND** signify to extend from the centre: one G followed by the **CLOSE** will signify to close to the right; three G's followed by the **WHEEL**, to wheel to the left.

N.B. The **HALT** annuls all previous sounds except the **FIRE**. When the **FIRE** is combined with any other call, it should always be the last of the two.

Bugle sounds do not apply to bodies of troops in reserve.

When moving by sound of bugle, men will wait till the bugle has ceased before they move.

[The numbers affixed to the Sounds at the end of this book correspond with those in the *Field Exercise*, pp. 210-212.]

---

\*.\* In the following pages, the directions in brackets [ ] to *shoulder Arms* and *fix Swords*, apply to the short Rifle.



## LIGHT INFANTRY MOVEMENTS OF A COMPANY.

The Company will fall in in two ranks at close order, with ordered Arms; the files lightly touching: and, having been numbered from right to left, will be told off into 2 Subdivisions and 4 Sections.

The left file of the right Subdivision will always be considered the centre of the Company.

### SECTION I.—EXTENDING.

[The number of paces that the files are to extend from each other may be specified in the Drill Instructor's *caution*, thus: **THREE PACES, FROM THE RIGHT—EXTEND.** When no number of paces is specified, 6 paces will be the distance between files. The rear-rank man of each file is responsible for distance: the front-rank man for direction.]

#### (1) *Extending from the Halt.*

FROM THE  
RIGHT (LEFT,  
CENTRE, or  
No.—  
FILE):  
EXTEND.

CALL 1.

*On the word (or Sound) EXTEND—*

The *Officers* fall to the rear. *See* page 9.

The file on the named flank (or the centre- or named file) kneels down: the remainder advance [or shoulder] Arms, face outwards, and extend in Quick time.

The front-rank men move direct to the flank to which they have faced, covering correctly on the march. The rear-rank men will cast their eyes over the inward shoulder; and each, as he gains the proper distance, will

tap his front-rank man on the shoulder as a signal, upon which both men will halt, front, and kneel.

[Men must be taught to extend from any file of a close Column of Sections (*see* p. 28), without previously re-forming Company: the named file will kneel; and the remainder, having faced outwards, will extend as above directed.]

(2) *Extending on the March.*

*On the word (or Sound) EXTEND—*

The file from which the extension is to be made continues to move straight forward in Quick time.

The remainder will make a *half* turn outwards, and move off in Double time: each file turning to its front and resuming the Quick time, when it has gained the required distance; the rear-rank men covering their front-rank men; and the whole keeping in line with the directing (centre) file.

N.B.—If the Company is ordered to HALT before all the files are extended: the remainder will make another *half* turn outwards (which will bring them into file), break into Quick time, advance [or shoulder] Arms, and complete their extension as from the Halt.

---

Men in extended order may be directed to increase the distance between their files any given number of paces; from either flank, the centre, or any named file. If the extension is ordered by bugle sound, or if no number of paces is specified in the word of command, the Skirmishers will open out *one half* more than their original extension; *e.g.*, if they are at 6 paces distance, they will open to 9 paces.

---

N.B.—Officers in command of Skirmishers should be able to judge the number of paces it is necessary to extend, in order to cover the front of a Line. When the extent of the front is known, one pace should be allowed for each file of the Line: thus—To cover the front, and over-lap the flanks of, 360 files (each file having a front of 21 inches), a Company of Skirmishers consisting of 40 files should, in extending, divide 360 paces: *i.e.*, the files should extend 9 paces from each other.

See *Field Exercise*, pp. 213-215.

## SECTION II.—CLOSING.

(1) *Closing at the Halt.*

ON THE  
RIGHT (LEFT,  
CENTRE, or  
No. — FILE):  
CLOSE.

—  
CALL II.

*On the word (or Sound) CLOSE—*

The file on the named flank (or the centre- or named file) will rise, order Arms, and stand at ease.

The remainder will rise, face towards the file on which the closing is to be made, and close in Quick time; each file in succession halting, fronting, ordering Arms, and standing at ease, as it gets to its place.

The *Officers* will remain in rear, unless directed to take post as in Company.

[The file on which the Skirmishers close may be faced in any direction: the remainder forming upon it accordingly.]

(2) *Closing on the March.*

*On the word (or Sound) CLOSE—*

The file on which the closing is to be made will move steadily on in Quick time: the remainder making a *half* turn towards it; closing in Double time; and turning to the front and resuming the Quick time, as they get to their places.

N.B.—If the Company is ordered to HALT before all the files are closed: the remainder will make a second *half* turn inwards (which will bring them into file), break into Quick time, and complete the closing as from the Halt.

See *Field Exercise*, p. 215.

### SECTION III.—FIRING IN SKIRMISHING ORDER, AT THE HALT.

COMMENCE  
FIRING.

CALL V.

*On the word (or Sound) COMMENCE FIRING—*

The front-rank men will make ready, fire, and re-load: the rear-rank men, when their respective front-rank men are in the act of capping, will make ready, fire, and re-load. See page 8.

---

A line of Skirmishers may be ordered to *lie down*, or single soldiers may lie down for the sake of cover: when firing in this position, both elbows must rest on the ground to support the body and rifle. The men will load on their knees: except in very exposed situations, when they may (if they prefer it) roll over on their backs, placing the butt of the rifle between the legs, lock upwards, and muzzle slightly elevated.

[Riflemen may, in favourable situations, fire while on their backs: the feet being crossed and the right foot passed through the sling of the rifle to support it.]

N.B.—When a line of Skirmishers halted is ordered to *advance* or *retire* firing, the front-rank men will first fire: the whole will then rise, and proceed as explained in the two following *Sections*.

See *Field Exercise*, p. 220.

## SECTION IV.—ADVANCING IN SKIRMISH- ING ORDER, AND FIRING.

COMPANY:     *On the word (or Sound) ADVANCE—*  
ADVANCE.

CALL III.     The men will rise, and step off in Quick time.

---

COMMENCE     *On the word (or Sound) COMMENCE FIRING—*  
FIRING.

CALL V.

The whole of the Skirmishers will make a momentary halt; the front-rank man of each file will then fire (kneeling, if he prefers it), and take a side-pace to his left. The rear-rank man will then pass on, the front-rank man following close in rear of him, loading on the march. When in the act of capping, the front-rank man will give the word "*Ready*" in an under tone of voice; on which the proper rear-rank man will fire. Both men will then proceed, alternately, as above described.

The loaded man in front is responsible for distance and dressing.

[When men find difficulty in loading on the march, they may halt and load, and then double up to their file leaders.]

The men must take advantage of any cover that may offer, running from one place to another as soon as they are loaded. When any considerable place of cover presents itself, several files may run up to it, fire and load, and then regain their distances and places in the general line of Skirmishers.

---

¶ *Passing Obstacles in Skirmishing order.*

When an obstacle (such as a pond or marsh) presents itself in front of a line of Skirmishers, the files opposite to it will open out gradually as they approach, and will pass on either side of it; closing upon the remaining files, which will continue moving straight to their front. Having passed the obstacle, the files that have been diverted from their direction by it, will again extend, and fill up the interval in the line.

A Company advancing, or retiring, in skirmishing order should also be practised in closing on *the centre files of Subdivisions or Sections*; those files continuing to march straight to their front: after which, the Company will be again extended from the same files, when the distances between the files ought to be found correct.

See *Field Exercise*, pp. 217, 220.

## SECTION V.—RETIRING IN SKIRMISHING ORDER, AND FIRING.

COMPANY: *On the word (or Sound) RETIRE—*  
RETIRE.

CALL VII. The men will rise, face to the right-about, and step off (in Quick time) rear rank in front.

---

COMMENCE *On the word (or Sound) COMMENCE FIRING—*  
FIRING.

CALL V.

Both ranks will halt and front. The front-rank man of each file will then fire, face to the right-about, and retire in Quick time; passing by the *left* of his rear-rank man, and loading as he retires. The rear-rank man of each file will follow close in rear of his front-rank man. As soon as the front-rank man's loading is completed, both men will halt and front; and the rear-rank man will give his fire, and proceed as above described for the front-rank man.

The men who are retiring and re-loading are responsible for distance and dressing.

[On rough ground, files will run back from one place of cover to another, selecting new cover before leaving the last: one man of each file should fire previous to moving, and re-load when again under cover.]



## SECTION VI.—INCLINING TO A FLANK, AND FIRING.

TO THE  
RIGHT (or  
LEFT):  
INCLINE.

CALL IX:  
*preceded by  
one G.  
or three G's.*

*On the word (or Sound) INCLINE—*

The Skirmishers will make a *half* turn to the ordered flank, and will move in a diagonal direction, till they are ordered to resume their original direction to the front [or rear] by the word (*or Sound*) ADVANCE [or RETIRE].

The leading file is the directing file: *see* page 7.

If the Skirmishers have made a half turn, and are again ordered to incline in the same direction; or if the bugle sounds the INCLINE a second time; they will make a second half turn (thus completing the *turn*), and will take ground to the flank in file.

COMMENCE  
FIRING.

CALL V.

*On the word (or Sound) COMMENCE FIRING—*

The front-rank men will halt, take steady aim, and fire: the rear-rank men moving on. Having fired, the front-rank men will double up to the proper rear of their respective rear-rank men, and will then load on the march [or, they may load at the halt, and *then* double up].

The rear-rank men, when the front-rank men's loading is completed, will proceed in like manner.

The loaded men are responsible for distance and dressing.

The **ADVANCE**, or the **RETIRE**, sounded when men are inclining to a flank, will indicate that the original direction is to be resumed.

If the **HALT** sounds, the men halt, *front*, and *kneel*.

See *Field Exercise*, pp. 218, 222.

## SECTION VII.—SKIRMISHERS CHANGING FRONT, OR DIRECTION.

[A line of Skirmishers halted, may change front on any two named files placed as a base for the rest to form upon. The change of front may be made at any angle; but it is not likely to be required to a greater extent than the sixteenth, or (at most) the eighth, of a circle.]

### (1) *From the Halt.*

CHANGE  
FRONT TO  
THE RIGHT  
(or LEFT) ON  
THE TWO  
CENTRE [or  
ON No. — AND  
No. —] FILES.

#### *On the Caution—*

The two named files will rise, and the Captain will dress them in the required direction: the files, when placed, will again kneel.

DOUBLE  
MARCH.

#### *On the word MARCH—*

The whole will rise.

(a) If all the files are to be thrown *forward* on a flank, they will make a half face inwards, and move across (by the shortest way) to their places in the new line: dressing on the two base files, as they successively halt; and then kneeling.

(b) If all the files are to be thrown *back* on either flank, they will make a three-quarters face in the direction of the base files: and will then move across, and (in succession) halt, front, and kneel, as they get to their places in the new line.

(c) If the change of front is on two central files, part of the Company will be thrown forward, as in (a): the remainder will be thrown back, as in (b).

[Recruits should first be taught this movement in *Quick* time, and by separate words of command. Thus, supposing the

change of front is to be to the right, on two central files:—the Instructor, after placing the base files, will give RISE. LEFT SUBDIVISION, RIGHT HALF FACE: RIGHT SUBDIVISION, LEFT ABOUT THREE-QUARTERS FACE. THE WHOLE: Q. MARCH.]

## (2) *On the March.*

[A line of Skirmishers on the march may change their direction gradually, on the same principle as a Company wheeling on a moveable pivot: see *Field Ex.*, p. 30.]

SKIRMISHERS: *On the word* (or *Sound*) WHEEL—

RIGHT (or LEFT) WHEEL. The pivot file will halt: and the remainder will

CALL X: circle round it; the front-rank men looking outwards  
*preceded by one G, or three G's.* for the dressing, and the rear-rank men keeping the

or FORWARD. distances from the pivot flank.

CALL III. or VII. *On the word* FORWARD (or *Sound* III. or VII.)—

The whole line will advance (by the centre) in the new direction.

N.B.—When Skirmishers wheel while *retiring*, the proper rear-rank men are responsible for dressing, proper front-rank men for distance.

See *Field Exercise*, p. 218.

## SECTION VIII.—RELIEVING SKIRMISHERS.

[The Movements described in this and the following Section are given in the *Field Exercise*, under the head of LIGHT INFANTRY MOVEMENTS OF A BATTALION; but may be practised by a Company, one Subdivision skirmishing, the other acting as a Support.]

(1) *Relieving halted Skirmishers.*

RELIEVE  
SKIRMISHERS.

The Support will extend in rear, out of immediate reach of fire; and will then run up to the line of Skirmishers.

The old Skirmishers, on being relieved, will run straight to their rear; and when out of immediate reach of fire, will close on the left file of the 1st or the right of the 4th Section (according as they belong to the right or left Subdivision); and become the Support.

(2) *Relieving Skirmishers that are advancing.*

The Support will extend on the march; and the men will then double up to the old Skirmishers, changing into Quick time as they pass through them.

The old Skirmishers will lie down till the new are sufficiently advanced to protect them from immediate fire: they will then rise, close as in (1), and form the Support.

(3) *Relieving Skirmishers that are retiring.*

The Support will halt, and front, at a considerable distance in rear; and will then extend, each man (if possible) getting under cover.

When the old Skirmishers arrive within 20 or 30 paces of the new, they will run through them to the rear, till out of immediate reach of fire ; they will then close, and form the Support, as already explained.

---

#### ¶ *Reinforcing Skirmishers.*

The Support (or part of it) will be thrown forward as in Relieving Skirmishers ; but on joining the line of Skirmishers will remain, and skirmish, in it ; the distances being divided. [When any portion of a line of Skirmishers is called in, they will retire in the same manner as relieved Skirmishers ; the remaining Skirmishers dividing the space left by those who have retired.]

---

N.B.—The Commander of the Support, when he brings it up to the Skirmishers, must call out that he is come to *relieve* or *reinforce* them, as the case may be, that the Commander of the latter may know how to act.

See *Field Exercise*, pp. 230-232.

## SECTION IX.—SKIRMISHERS CLOSING ON THE SUPPORT.

### (1) *The Close.*

CLOSE ON  
SUPPORT.

—  
CALL II.

The Skirmishers rise, face to the right-about, and retire: the inner files of Sections moving at Quick time, and opening out, as they move to the rear, so as to clear the front of the Support; the remainder closing on those files, in the usual manner, as they retire.

When at Section distance in rear of the Support, the Sections will turn inwards, advancing [or shouldering] Arms as they turn: and as they meet (in rear of the centre of the Support), will halt and front, order Arms, and stand at ease, without any word of command.

CLOSE.  
LOOK OUT FOR  
CAVALRY.

—  
CALL II:  
*followed by*  
CALL XI.

### (2) † *The Close and Alarm.*

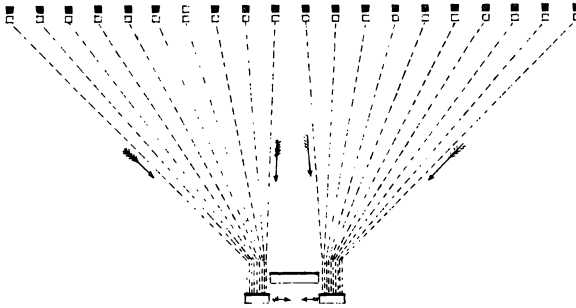
The Support will advance, forming Sections on the march (*see Note*): and the Skirmishers will move to the rear at the double; closing on the inward files of Sections as in (1), except that the centre files will incline outwards, in order to clear the front of the Support, as they *commence* retiring.

As the Skirmishers approach the Support, the latter will halt, its rear Section closing on its leading Section, and both Sections fixing bayonets [or swords] as they come to the halt.

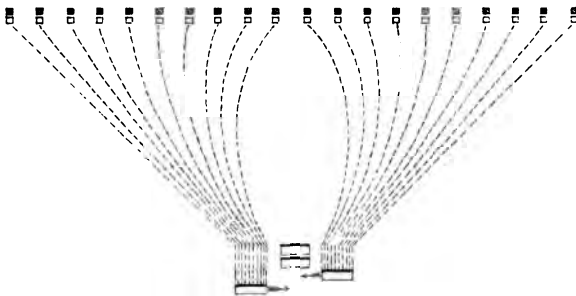
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† If the Skirmishers are supposed to be closely pressed by Cavalry, and unable to reach their Support, (which, at Drill, will be signified by the DOUBLE being sounded after the ALARM), they will form Rallying Square. (*See p. 30.*)

*Fig. 1.*  
**SKIRMISHERS CLOSING ON THEIR SUPPORT.**  
[*The Close.*]



*Fig. 2.*  
**CLOSING ON SUPPORT IN PRESENCE OF CAVALRY.**  
[*The Close and Alarm.*]







The Skirmishers then turn inwards (*see* Note), so as to form close Column of Sections with the Support: fixing bayonets [or swords] as they halt and front.

The Column will then be ordered to prepare for Cavalry (*see* p. 29).

*Note.*—When the Subdivision—*whether it is the Right or Left*—acting as the Support, forms Sections on the march, the Section on the *left* will invariably double in rear of the other. In like manner, the Section that was on the left while skirmishing, will move into Column in rear of the Section that was on the right: those Sections thus passing each other, according to the general rule, left arm to left arm.

---

When the **EXTEND** sounds, the old Support will advance and extend from the centre, thus becoming the new Skirmishers; the old Skirmishers will form Subdivision in support. Or, the old Support may extend *from the halt* on its own ground; the old Skirmishers re-forming Subdivision, and retiring to their proper distance as the Support.

*See Field Exercises, pp. 234–236.*

## SECTION X.—SQUARES.

## (A) COMPANY SQUARES.

*From close order.*

[In forming from *close order* (i.e. when not extended), the men will move into Column with advanced [or shouldered] Arms: the Section of formation (No. 2) fixing bayonets [or swords] at the word **MARCH**; the remainder, as they halt and front in column.]

(From close  
order)  
FORM CLOSE  
COLUMN OF  
SECTIONS,  
—  
Q. MARCH.

(1) *On the word SECTIONS—*

The 1st Section faces to the left, and disengages to the front (by the leading file closing 2 paces outwards): the 3rd and 4th Sections face to the right, and disengage (in like manner) to the rear.

The 2d Section stands fast.

(2) *On the word MARCH—*

Close Column is formed on the 2d Section: the men halting and fronting, as they arrive in Column, without word of command. The distance between the Sections will be one pace.

The *Captain* places himself on the left of the front rank of the leading Section: the *Lieutenant* and *Ensign* will be on the reverse flanks of the 3rd and 4th Sections respectively.

[The men should count the steps they have to take in getting into Column: so that, in re-forming Company, the men of the 1st Section may turn to the rear; those of the 3rd and 4th Sections, to the front; together.]

*From extended order.*

The men order Arms and fix bayonets [or swords], independently, as they halt and front in their places.

[A Company must be practised in closing from extended order into close Column of Sections, *on any named file*: when no file is named, the men will close on the left file of the 2nd Section. If much pressed by Cavalry, the first Section formed may commence firing; and the remainder may form in rear of it, the Sections passing each other left arm to left arm.]

If the INCLINE sounds while the men are in Square, they will advance [or shoulder] their Arms; and face into, and move off in, the ordered direction.

*2. Resisting Cavalry.*

PREPARE FOR CAVALRY. *On the word* CAVALRY—

READY.

The *Officers* and N. C. officers move into the centre of the Column: the men will then face outwards, so as to show a front of equal strength in every direction.

*On the word* READY—

If the sides of the Square are two- or three-deep, the 'front rank only, will kneel: if four-deep, the 2 front ranks will kneel. The remainder come to the 'Ready.'

For firing words, *see* page 32.

*3. Re-forming Company.*

RE-FORM COLUMN. *On the word* COLUMN—

RE-FORM COMPANY.

Q. MARCH.

The men will face to their proper front in Column, and will touch into the pivot flanks. The *Officers* move out to their places on the flanks of Sections.

*On the word* COMPANY—

Nos. 1, 3, and 4 Sections face outwards, and

*On the word* MARCH—

Move out: the 1st Section, when clear, turning to the rear, the 3rd and 4th Sections (in succession) to the front. Each of the three Sections will form up in line with the 2nd Section without word of command: the *Officers* taking post as with a Support.

Bayonets [or Swords] will be unfixed by word of command.

### (B) THE RALLYING SQUARE.

[This Square is for men of different Companies mixed together in extended order, or for detached Skirmishers overtaken by Cavalry.]

FORM RALLY-  
ING SQUARE.

CALL XI:  
followed by  
CALL XIV.

*On the word* SQUARE—

The men will double up to the *nearest Officer\** standing as a rallying point: fixing bayonets [or swords], and ordering Arms, as they reach him. The 2 first men who come up to the Officer form on his right and left, facing outwards: the 3 next in front: the 3 next in rear, facing to the rear.

The next 4 men place themselves one at each angle of the Square thus formed: and others, as they come up, complete the face between those angles.

After each completion of the faces of the Square, the 4 next men place themselves one at each angle: others completing the faces as before.

\* Officers giving points for Skirmishers to form on, should place themselves in echelon with each other, so as not to mask the fire of any face.

2. *Resisting Cavalry.*

As in (A).

3. *Re-forming.*

REDUCE  
THE SQUARE. *On the word SQUARE—*

The *Officer* will give *Re-form Company* (*Subdivision, or Section*).

The *Covering-serjeant* will mark the pivot flank, facing the supposed enemy: and the men will form upon him.

Bayonets [or Swords] will be unfixed by word of command.

---

Dispersed parties may be formed as above, in one or more Squares (each Square consisting of any number of men) according as they may be more or less dispersed. Every man will run to the rallying point nearest him.

See *Field Exercise*, p. 216.

## SECTION XI. — A SQUARE RECEIVING CAVALRY.

*Prepare for Cavalry* { The 2nd and 4th ranks take  
a pace of 9 inches to the front.

*Ready . . . . .* { The 2 front ranks sink down  
on the right knee, as a front  
and rear rank kneeling; and  
place the butts of the rifles on  
the ground, against the inside  
of that knee—locks uppermost,  
and muzzles slanting upwards;  
the left hand grasps the rifle  
just above the lowest band, the  
right holds the small of the  
butt; the left arm rests on the  
thigh, 6 inches in rear of the  
left knee. The 3rd and 4th  
ranks make ready as a front  
and rear rank standing; muz-  
zles of the rifles inclined up-  
wards.

*Commence Firing  
from the — of Faces* { The standing ranks com-  
mence File-firing, thus;—The  
files fire in succession, front-  
and rear-rank men alternately,  
from the named flank, for the  
1st round; each file then loads  
and fires independently.

*Cease Firing* . . . { Each file completes its loading and shoulders ; those that are at the ' Ready ' first half-cocking their rifles.

*Kneeling ranks*  
[of the — face]:  
*Fire a Volley.*

*At — yards: Ready* { The kneeling ranks come to the capping position, bringing the weight of the body on the right heel ; adjust the sights ; full cock ; and fix the eye steadfastly on an object in front.

*Present* . . . { After firing, the rifles are again brought down to receive Cavalry.

*Load* . . . { The kneeling ranks spring to Attention at the half face, and bring the rifle to an horizontal position at the right side, seizing it with the right hand close in front of the left ; then come to the ' Prepare to load ' position as standing ranks, and go on with the loading in Quick time.

N.B.—When the sides of the Square are less than four-deep, the front rank, only, will kneel.

See *Field Exercise*, p. 375.



## SECTION XII.—AN ADVANCED AND REAR GUARD, ON A ROAD.

The *Lieutenant* will take command of the front Section: the *Ensign*, of the next (or Support): the *Captain*, of the 2 rear Sections (or Reserve).

Suppose a halted Column, Right in front.

### (a) AN ADVANCED GUARD.

The Captain of the leading Company (if no other Company's call is sounded) will give:—

*Right Section to the front. Remaining Sections: on the move, Right wheel. Quick March. (When square)—Forward.*

The 3 rear Sections having, in succession, got the word *Left wheel* from their respective leaders: the Captain will give Column: *Halt*, and will then proceed to give the following commands:—

1. † *Nos. 1 and 2 files from the right of No. 1 Section, with a Corporal: advanced Party.—Advance.*

(Interval of 60 paces.)

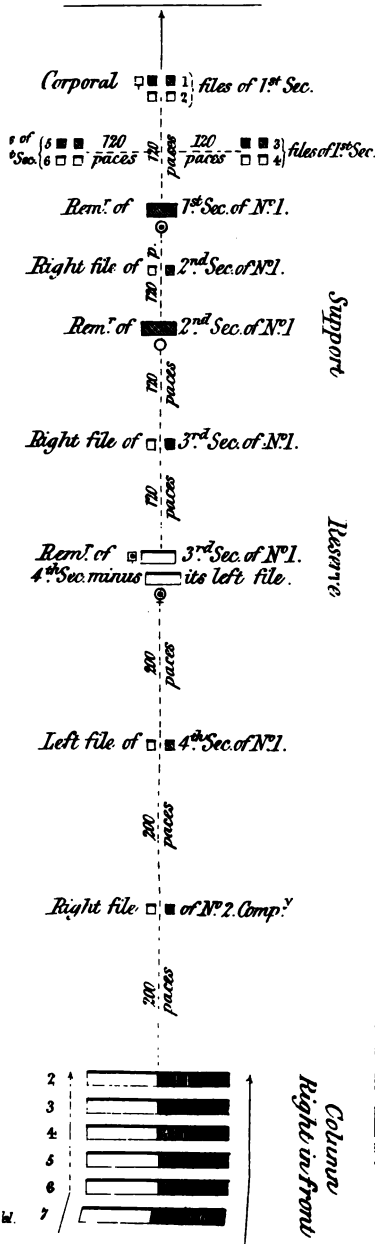
2. † *Nos. 3 and 4 files: Right flanking Party.* } *Advance.*  
    † *Nos. 5 and 6 files: Left flanking Party.* }

(Interval of 60 paces.)

3. *Remainder of 1st Section.—Advance.*

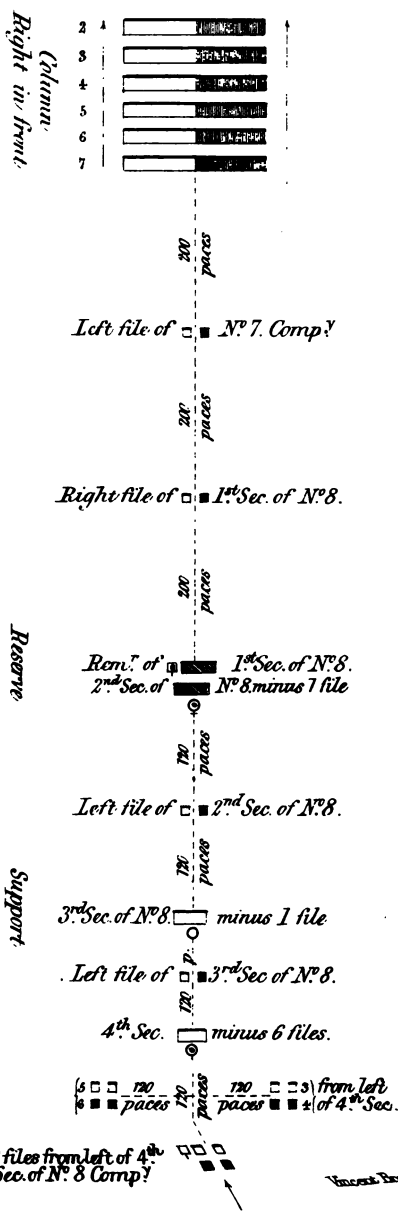
† A weak Company may send on only one file and a Corporal in front, and one file on each flank.

# An Advanced Guard.



# A Rear Guard.

P. 34.





(Interval of 60 paces.)

4. *Right file of No. 2 Section: connecting file.—Advance.*

(Interval of 60 paces.)

5. *Remainder of 2nd Section: Support.—Advance.*

(Interval of 120 paces.)

6. *Right file of No. 3 Section: connecting file.—Advance.*

(Interval of 120 paces.)

7. *Stand fast the Left file of No. 4 Section. Nos. 3 and 4 Sections, Reserve:—Advance.*

N.B.—If the Column is Left in front, the leading Company will form Column of Sections Left in front; and the formation of the Advanced Guard will commence from the left of the leading Section.

---

[An Advanced Guard *on a plain*, is simply a line of Skirmishers with Supports, and—if far distant from the main body—with a Reserve. When the leading files of an Advanced Guard on a road come out on a plain, they will halt and lie down: the flanking files moving up and lying down with them at their usual distances of 100 yards. The remainder of the leading Section, as it comes up, will extend from its centre: the 2nd Section will also extend from its centre and reinforce the leading Section. The Skirmishers thus formed will advance, correcting their distances from the centre on the march: the reserve will form Subdivision, and act as a Support to the Skirmishers.

An Advanced Guard, thus extended, may resume its original formation by the leading files moving on, and the remainder halting till they have gained their proper distances and then following on in succession; the remainder of the 1st and 2nd Sections closing on their centres.]

## (b) A REAR GUARD.

The Captain of the rear Company of the Column, if no other Company's call is sounded, will give:—

*By Sections: on the move, Left wheel. Quick March:* and when the Sections have wheeled square, *Forward. No. 4 Section: Left wheel. Forward.*

The 3 rear Sections having, in succession, got the word *Left wheel* from their respective leaders: the Captain will give *Column: Halt*, and will proceed as in (a), only commencing from the left of No. 4 Section.

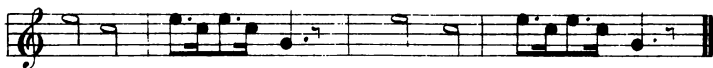
[If the Column is *on the March*—the Guard may be formed by the different parties facing about in succession, and marching off as the Column gains the proper distance from each.]

THE END.

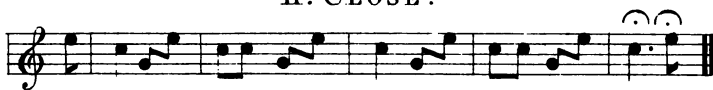


# BUGLE SOUNDS.

## I. EXTEND.



## II. CLOSE.



## III. ADVANCE.

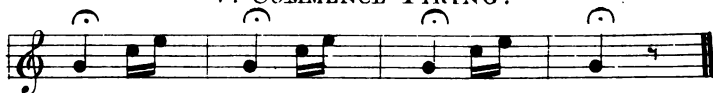


## IV. HALT.

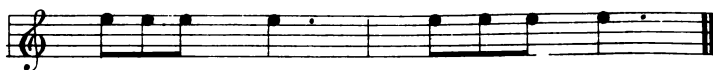


The *Halt* annuls all previous Sounds except the *Fire*.

## V. COMMENCE FIRING.



## VI. CEASE FIRING.



## VII. RETIRE.

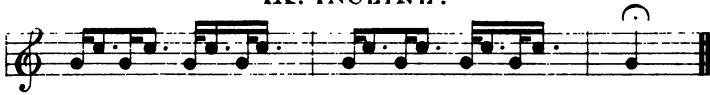


## VIII ASSEMBLY.



*This Sound will be used to turn out troops in cases of alarm by day or night; and for no other purpose.*

## IX. INCLINE.

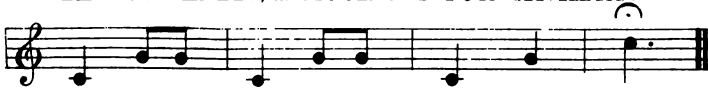


## X. WHEEL.

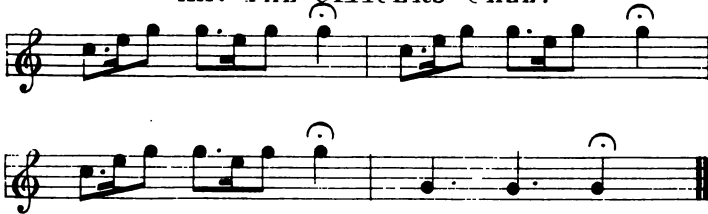


The calls IX and X must be preceded by the distinguishing G's .

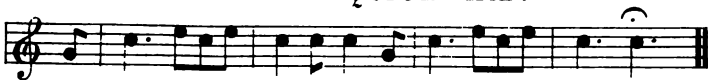
## XI. THE ALARM, OR LOOK OUT FOR CAVALRY.



## XII. THE OFFICERS' CALL.



### XIII. THE QUICK TIME.



#### XIV. THE DOUBLE TIME.





1  
2

3  
4

5







